



SPIRITUAL FRONTIERS FELLOWSHIP

Newsletter

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FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Activity rather than reflection is the tempo of the director's office. Mail, book orders (send for new sales list), new memberships and contributions capture our attention.

Members visited in July and August want to make progress individually and in groups in their healing, psychic and spiritual unfoldment. The new SFF lessons beginning in this Newsletter, written by Dr. Marcus Bach, are intended for individual and group study. SFF's library contains a wide range of guides to development.

Every SFF member is both a student and a motivator whether he or she intends to be or not. The only limitations are goals and extent of time and discipline directed toward having one's own spiritual experience. Participation in study groups is recommended. Are you willing to give leadership to receive?

A leadership program for area and group leaders is already in formation under the direction of Dr. Marcus Bach. In addition to the Procedures Guide, what, specifically, is wanted from a leadership seminar? Write us your needs and willingness to participate.

Corresponding with growth are equipment needs conducive to efficiency and getting the information out. Needed are a director's desk and furniture; a copy or duplicating machine; a folding machine; and a Selectric typewriter equipped with "ball-heads" for preparing lessons and newsletters for printing.

The pace of SFF is increasing. Membership is growing. The costs can be met. The opportunity to contribute and to experience is ours together.

Yours in fellowship,

LIBRARY Bob Ericsson

ASSOCIATION FOR RESEARCH & ENLIGHTENMENT
VIRGINIA BEACH, VIRGINIA

ANNUAL RETREAT HELD IN JULY

Beautiful Carleton College in Minnesota was again the setting for the week-long annual SFF Retreat. Under the direction of Rev. Henry Hein, the Retreat's theme was "Psychic Phenomena and Immortality."

Dr. Marcus Bach opened the conference by urging SFF members to recognize the experiences they may be having as possibly indicative of God-awareness in a new age. He said "If the experiences we have do not elevate us into a higher ethical and social consciousness we had better re-examine them... When you go deeply in psychic experiences, you reach the ethic accountability and when you get there you know all men are one." Dr. Bach concluded two days of lectures by pointing out that the search for meaning is the search for self.

Dr. Shafica Karagulla, author and neuro-psychiatric researcher, identified the energy fields that surround the body, and described her research with sensitives who are able to discern with uncanny accuracy energy fields and changes in them.

Other speakers were Mrs. Irene Hughes, Rev. Dorothy Moore, Rev. Katie King, Mr. Clem Tamburrino, and Pat and Bud Hayes.

The Retreat provided a real stepping stone for the use of the psychic in the development of personal spiritual fulfillment.

A NEW STUDY SERIES FOR MEMBERS

An exciting, new study lesson series begins on page 3! Dr. Marcus Bach, respected theologian and author offers it here for you to enjoy, study and discuss with other members. Lend it to newcomers. It will help SFF grow in your area.

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ASSOCIATION FOR RESEARCH & ENLIGHTENMENT
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NEWS NOTES

- The new Joliet Area, Ill. meets for dinner and workshop at Richards Street United Methodist Church on Oct 9, and on Nov. 21 for an all-day Seminar.
- Denver-Colorado Area's organization meeting was well attended. Leaders are Dr. Lambert Case, Mrs. Mary Frances Young and Dr. Peggy Walsh. Dr. Robert Bradley spoke on his research and psychic experiences.
- The Northeast Region hosted 250 enthusiastic members only for a "Psychic Involvement Weekend." A remarkable panel of psychics discussed "How We Developed and What Its All About!" Area leaders formed a Regional Committee and visited the Paul Hopes and friends.
- Southeast Florida Area members honored leaders Pat and Bud Hayes with Life Memberships in SFF by contributing \$1,000.
- An SFF Life Member has contributed a second \$250 for free Spiritual Frontiers Journals subscriptions to colleges and universities. Does your alma mater or local school have a subscription? The Central Pennsylvania Area has already provided gift subscriptions to more than 30 libraries - thereby reaching many new people.
- SFF needs the help of everyone. This is especially true during the present period of staff expansion and printing costs for lessons. One corporation has pledged \$100 every two months ... Library users have mailed in extra dollars in appreciation of this service - which makes our librarian very happy.
- SFF members near California, Pa., may phone 938-8764 to discuss forming a group.
- The rental fee for tapes from the Evanston headquarters library has been reduced from \$1.00 to 50¢.
- Congratulations to Atlanta Area. Excellent programs. Top "member getter" in recent months.

SFF IN THE NEWS

- Sept-Oct. Psychic magazine features an interview and full-page color photograph of Rev. Ford. Rev. Ford discusses his mediumship, his life as a minister and psychic, his beliefs and philosophies. Rev. Wm. Rauscher, SFF Council member and former President, authors a companion article in the same issue on SFF's history, purposes, activities and leading personalities. This issue of Psychic may be obtained free by all SFF members who subscribe during this period. Rates are \$3.80 for one year and \$7.00 for two years. Write Psychic, Subs. 8, P.O. Box 26289, Custom House, San Francisco, Calif. 94126.
- Sept. Fate magazine, devotes several paragraphs to SFF in the column "I See By the Papers" by SFF Vice-President, Curtis Fuller. His favorable comments have already stimulated a number of new members applications and inquiries. Write Fate, 500 Hyacinth Place, Highland Park, Illinois 60035.
- The Chicago Daily News gave the headline on "Religion in the News" to "Psychic Phenomena and the Church" a lecture at Garrett Seminary, Evanston, Ill., by Rev. J. Gordon Melton, Research-Director, The Institute for the Study of American Religion. Rev. Melton formed the North Shore SFF Area Group now under the chairmanship of Rev. Don Everhart. Dr. Marcus Bach will kick-off the North Shore program Sept. 29.

CAMPUS NEWS

- Rev. L. Richard Batzler, Defiance, Ohio, reported that in meetings with college students and parents that students are looking for spiritual growth and development to balance their interests in social action. "SFF has a unique opportunity to help meet their needs by getting to the campuses." Mrs. Dorothy Ackerman in Minneapolis meets weekly with a college student group and discusses every phase of psychic and spiritual interaction. Also, see Aug. Psychic magazine for information on university courses.

The Newsletter of Spiritual Frontiers Fellowship is published ten times a year (monthly except July and August), by the Spiritual Frontiers Fellowship, the office is located at 800 Custer, Evanston, Illinois 60202. Members of SFF receive the Newsletter by virtue of membership. Second-class postage paid at Evanston, Illinois.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF PSYCHISM

Introduction

A friend of mine said to me, "I am interested in psychical studies. I would like to know more about the unseen world, especially since I'm eventually going there. I have read about the psyche and how the early Greeks compared it to the evolution of the butterfly. But when I go to some of these seances and things, the butterflies often turn out to be dragonflies."

This piqued me a bit, so to say, for my favorite and most quoted quote about the psyche is the one that says:

"Do you suppose a caterpillar knows,
Its future lies in butterflies?"

And often there comes to mind the popular cartoon which shows a caterpillar gazing apprehensively at some butterflies overhead. With a dubious look on his wrinkled face, he says, "You'll never get me up in one of those things!"

So I told my friend about Spiritual Frontiers Fellowship and gave him some of its literature. He is now a member and is expecting great things.

Good for him, but he will have to learn, as we all must, that any approach to psychism, any sharing in psychical experiences, any training as a sensitive is an inside job, one that will be immeasurably enhanced if we take time to broaden the Intellectual, Spiritual and Psychological scope of our psychic understanding.

What we need is at least a short-course in the philosophy of psychism. Too often our approach is superficial, our expectancy shallow, our insight and attitude elementary.

This is not to suggest that the basic tone of psychic research or participation should be heavy or ominous. On the contrary, it should be relaxed, friendly and cooperative, but these qualities cannot be effected if the basis of knowledge is narrow, prejudiced or self-centered. The purpose of this series of lessons is to broaden the base.

The lessons will come to you as part of SFF's service to its members. The material will be designed so that it can be used either in group study classes or by the individual who would rather go over the lessons in the quiet of his home.

Our thesis, as indicated above, is that SFF should make at least three contributions to the total advance of the psychic field. It should make it intellectually respectable, spiritually acceptable, and psychologically accredited for our contemporary time.

Let us see how this can be done as we deal in this Lesson #1 with the first of these challenges: THE INTELLECTUAL FACTOR.

THE INTELLECTUAL FACTOR

1.

By PSYCHISM we mean the hypothesis of spirit survival. Actually the word needs no apologist and no defense.

We are immediately in good company when we express our interest of even a sincere curiosity in this field. We are in the company of those men and women whose psychic experiences are recorded in Scripture. We are with philosophers and religionists who throughout history were persuaded that man is potentially spirit. We are with those renowned researchers whose dedicated efforts created the various Psychical Research Societies here and abroad. We are with those increasing numbers in our own day who have an ever-growing interest in this subject. We should cease being apologetic about our involvement or exploration in the fascinating mystery and meaning of the psychic stream.

Who, these days, apologizes for an interest in psychoanalysis, psychosomatic medicine, or exploits in outer space, even though no one knows exactly where these explorations are leading, and all of which are relatively modern areas of serious research? Psychism is now an accredited field of scientific study and is so accepted by SFF.

The first principle is this: To gain psychic altitude, increase your psychic attitude.

It is the attitude of approach in any field that determines the degree of success or failure. The new philosophical move in psychism is to make the study as respectable as research in the natural sciences, the humanities, or any other area.

This does not mean that we rule out the lowliest phenomena or disregard the most isolated happenings. It means, rather, to have a higher estimate of psychic studies which all too long have been associated with curtained-off rooms and hide-and-seek experiences.

Tell yourself, tell your study group: To gain psychic altitude, increase your psychic attitude.

Application of principle: Become aware that psychism has a relationship with total life. It is not confined to a seance room, a psychic session, a private sitting. It involves experiences at every level of personal encounter.

Creativity, self-expression, perceptivity, all have psychic overtones. Prayer, meditation, contemplation, all are inter-related to spirit survival.

What is your reaction to these statements of principle? How would your relationship to a psychic session change if you accepted the "total life" concept as valid and true?

2.

Second principle in the intellectual factor: Learn to discern the range of the supernormal.

As the attitude of approach in any field determines your degree of success or failure, so the matter of knowledge particularizes your degree of understanding. The more wisdom you bring into an area of research the more meaningful the area becomes.

People who know little about psychism, naturally see little in psychism.

We still hear the complaint and the caution, "If there are good spirits there must also be evil ones, and how do you know which will come through?" We try to answer, "By their fruits you shall know them," or "Try the spirits whether they are of God." A better answer is, LEARN TO DISCERN!

What we are dealing with is a matter of knowledge involving a discernment of the range of the supernormal and the need for learning more about the philosophy of psychism. Arthur Ford in Nothing So Strange makes an interesting and constructive point:

"One thing is sure: a malevolent entity can gain access to the sensitive's mind only through some weakness of character, pride, desire for fame or power, an over-willingness to set aside judgment or to avoid making choices, antagonisms, hate. The pure in heart are safe and those truly devoid of self-interest find unseen collaborators of the same sort.

"In every phase of psychic endeavor there are laws at work and the adept quite as much as the student has to keep lining himself up with them. Physical fitness, moral responsibility, mental equilibrium, emotional harmony, spiritual expectancy, a dedicated will --- all are the supportive concomitants of expanded awareness."

In other words, if you don't know your spirit entities, at least know your medium!

And when psychic phenomenon happens to you, know thyself and you will know your entities!

How do you fit into Ford's quote?

We learn to discern the range of the supernormal only by a broad basis of knowledge of the psychic factors and also knowledge of psycho-analytic factors --- the subconscious, multiple personalities, dissociation of personality. The wider the range the better the learning and discerning.

Third principle: Intuition is as valid as intellection in appraising the psychic experience.

I have been to many psychic sessions --- and so have you --- which according to logical reasoning, sober observation and even esthetic response hit new psychic lows.

Nonetheless, usually someone in the group thought the demonstration was great. Why? There are many reasons, but one possibility is that the person was intuitively convinced of the genuineness of the phenomena and no rational say-so or empiric observations on your part could dispel the impression.

This, too, has happened to me. At a deep feeling level I was persuaded of the authenticity of the happening and those who called it a new low or even fake or fraud could not dislodge my intuitive counsel.

What are we trying to say? Every psychic experience, every session has its personal and transpersonal threshold. Intuition is frequently the key that unlocks the door and reveals to us what is true and what is false for us. We have a right to our own judgment and evaluation.

Remind yourself and your study group: Intuition is as valid as intellection in appraising the psychic experience. Psychism is not something to argue about or to defend but to quietly evaluate and absorb. Remember the personal threshold. It is yours.

That some people have a greater will-to-believe than others goes without saying. That some are more experienced and more receptive is also a fact. That some are easily taken in by fraud, trickery, hypnotism and magic has been amply proved. Still, the point to remember is that intuition (an impression self-evident to an intelligent mind) must be taken into consideration and is as valid as intellection in appraising the psychic experience.

Application of principle: Zen speaks of a point of perception called prajna or transcendental wisdom.

Prajna takes place when finite objects of sense and intellect are identified with the infinite itself. In other words, Prajna is the ability to view an object or a situation from the point of view of infinity.

The intellect may inform you that the object is finite, but Prajna declares it to be infinite beyond the realm of relativity."

Have you had any experiences in psychism which proved that your intuitive sense was as valid or more valid than your intellectual reasoning?

The fourth principle: Flexibility and integrity are cardinal qualities in psychic participation and evaluation.

This principle may seem paradoxical or contradictory. The intellectual factor in our approach to the philosophy of psychism requires an open mind while maintaining the essential surety of one's convictions. This is neither easy nor simple. It poses the same sort of challenge that requires a person to have deep religious convictions and yet a sense of honest give-and-take with people who believe differently.

Can you do it? Can the members of your study group do it? Can you take your tried and tested views about spirit communication, for example, and engage amiably in research that challenges your preconceptions or pre-convictions?

Psychical phenomena and psychical study are unique and important in that they make the concept of survival ultimately meaningful.

Belief in life after death is admittedly a matter of faith and to many devout people this is as it should be. This faith implies faith in the evidences of the Bible, faith in the promises of Jesus Christ, faith in cosmological views, in eschatological theories, faith in the feeling of immortality within oneself, in nature, and so on. Most of us do not require proof that "the dead live."

Psychism, however, need not necessarily be pursued because a person insists on proof, it may be carried on because he already has proof.

It may be engaged in to gain evidence and insight into an area which has already been accepted on faith. Research need not be for proof but for purpose, the purpose of better understanding the total continuity and meaning of life.

In essence there is no true research without faith anyway.

Application of principle: Psychologist William James in his lecture on PSYCHICAL RESEARCH said, "Wherever a debate between the mystics and the scientist has been once and for all decided, it is the mystics who have usually proved to be right about the facts, while the scientists have had the better of it in regard to the theories."

With flexibility and integrity as cardinal qualities in psychic participation it is possible to combine in one individual or one group both the mystical and the scientific approach.

Can you think of an illustration out of your own life where you exercised both flexibility and integrity in any situation, or do you feel you do it in all situations?

SUMMARY: We have started our series of lessons dealing with an approach to THE PHILOSOPHY OF PSYCHISM. Two lessons will be devoted to each of the three areas, the Intellectual, the Spiritual, the Psychological.

It should be remembered that we are dealing with a "space limitation" and also with a wide cross-section of nearly ten thousand readers. We believe, however, that we have a new approach and that by a proper use of this material we may link peak experiences in psychic work to a deepening of the total spiritual life.

LESSON HELP: To remember the Principles presented, think in these terms:

Principle 1: ALTITUDE --- ATTITUDE.

Principle 2: LEARN --- DISCERN.

Principle 3: INTUITION --- INTELECTION.

Principle 4: FLEXIBILITY --- INTEGRITY.

READINGS FOR A BROADER OVERVIEW:

The Symbolic and the Real, Ira Progoff (Julian Press)

"It is essential that many modern persons truly come to know that the human spirit is infinite, and that the forms in which it reaches toward reality are both symbolic and manifold. They must learn this is not merely as a philosophy with which they agree intellectually, but as a fact which they have become capable of verifying repeatedly in their personal experience. They will know then why it is that if we place arbitrary limits upon the forms in which ultimate contact can be achieved, we are untrue to the magnitude of human personality."

William James on Psychical Research, edited by Gardner Murphy & Robert Ballou (Viking Press)

"Psychics represent a special branch of education in which experts are only gradually becoming developed. The phenomena are as massive and widespread as is anything in nature, and the study of them is as tedious, repellent and undignified. To reject it for its unromantic character is like rejecting bacteriology because penicillium glaucum grows on horse-dung and bacterium termo lives in putrefaction. Scientific men have long ago ceased to think of the dignity of the materials with which they work!... I look forward to the day when the abstract essentials of belief will be the basis of communion more than the particular forms and concrete doctrines in which they articulate themselves...."

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